

## **A Clean Environment is Important to All of Us!**

In the City of Manhattan Beach, storm drains flow directly to the beach and into the ocean without treatment. Storm water pollution is a serious problem for our natural environment and for people who live near streams or wetlands.

Storm water pollution comes from a variety of sources including oil, fuel, and fluids, from vehicles and heavy equipment, pesticide



runoff from landscaping, and from materials such as concrete, mortar and soil from construction activities.

The City of Manhattan Beach is committed to improving water quality and reducing the amount of pollutants that enter our precious waterways.

## **A Pollution Solution**

### **A Word About “Biodegradable” Soaps**

“Biodegradable” is a popular marketing term that can be misleading. Because a product is labeled as biodegradable doesn’t mean that it is non-toxic. Some products are more toxic than others, but none are harmless to aquatic life. Soapy water entering the storm drain system can impact an aquatic environment in the ocean, within hours.



City of Manhattan Beach  
Public Works Department  
3621 Bell Avenue  
Manhattan Beach, CA 90266  
(310) 802-5300

**Storm Water HOTline: 1-888-CleanLA**

[www.citymb.info](http://www.citymb.info)

## **BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES FOR POWER WASHING**

### **Mobile and Surface Cleaning**



**City of Manhattan Beach  
Storm Water Protection  
Program  
Storm Water HOTline  
1-888-CleanLA**



## Catch it Before the Catch Basin!

### What is power washing?

Power washing is any activity that uses a water pressure system, including steam cleaning, to clean vehicles, equipment, sidewalks, buildings, dumpsters, or other impervious surfaces. In addition to water, other products such as detergents and degreasers may be used in commercial power washing.

### What's the problem with power washing?

Did you know that storm drains are NOT connected to sanitary sewer systems and treatment plants? The primary purpose of storm drains is to carry rainwater away from developed areas to prevent flooding. Wash water from power washing activities may contain significant quantities of oil and grease, chemicals, dirt, and detergents that could end up in our local waterways. Disposing of these materials into storm drains causes serious ecological problems—and is PROHIBITED by law. You could be given a citation or fined for discharging pollutants to the storm drain system.

### Best Management Practices

Best Management Practices or BMPs are procedures that help to prevent pollutants from entering our storm drains. Each of us can do our part to keep storm water clean. Using BMPs adds up to a pollution solution!

### Doing the Job Right!

#### Try it Dry!

- Instead of pressure washing, determine what alternative dry methods are available.
- Use mops, brooms, rags or wire brushes to clean pavement, buildings and equipment as much as possible.
- Use vacuums or other machines to remove and collect loose debris before applying water.



#### Location, Location, Location!!!

- Prior to any washing, block all storm drains with an impervious barrier such as sandbags or berms, or seal the storm drain with plugs or rubber mats.
- Wash vehicles and equipment on grassy or gravel areas so that the wash water can seep into the ground.
- Create a containment area with berms and tarps or take advantage of a low spot to keep wash water contained.
- Check that the wash water is not leaking through and add more berms or barriers to contain the wash water.

#### Just Enough for the Job!

- Minimize water use by using high pressure, low volume nozzles.
- Use the minimal amount and least toxic detergents and degreasers you will need to complete the job. Try phosphate free detergents.
- Use a mop or rags to clean heavily soiled areas before power washing.

#### Clean it Up!

- Do not wash equipment or vehicles outdoors on saturated ground or on days when rain is probable.
- Pump or vacuum up all wash water in the contained area.
- With property owners permission, pump or pour the wash water to the sanitary sewer through an interior building drain, sink, or private sewer clean-out. Discharges to the sewer must meet requirements of the Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts (562) 699-7411, and should not contain hazardous materials, excessive grease, grit, or any material that could clog piping.
- Sediments and other solids that remain on the ground should be swept or vacuumed up immediately before they are washed into the storm drain system.

